

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ANTWER 00962 01 OF 02 270925Z
ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 AGRE-00 CIAE-00 /031 W
-----087878 271001Z /13

P 270915Z JUL 78

FM AMCONSUL ANTWERP

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2227

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ANTWERP 0962

E. O. 11652: XGDS-20

TAGS: BAGB, EEWT, ETRN, BE

SUBJECT: SOVIET GRAIN TRANSSHIPMENT IN WESTERN EUROPE

REF: (A) STATE 167837; (B) C-ER-8-55061

1. INFORMATION ON NEGOTIATIONS AND CONTRACTS MADE BY SOVIETS IS DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN. WE LEARNED, HOWEVER, THAT GRAIN TRANSSHIPMENTS BY THE SOVIETS ARE HANDLED BY SOVFRACHT, THE OFFICIAL FREIGHT FORWARDING AGENCY OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT AND SOFINFLOT, THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT OWNED AGENT OF ALL RUSSIAN SHIPS.

2. THE BULK OF SOVIET GRAIN TRANSSHIPMENTS IN ANTWERP IS HANDLED BY TWO FIRMS: SOBELGRA AND SOCIETE GENERALE DES MINERAIS. SOBELGRA IS THE LARGEST GRAIN TERMINAL IN THE PORT OF ANTWERP. IT IS A BELGIAN FIRM, THE CAPITAL OF WHICH IS HELD BY SIX BELGIANS AND ONE U.S.

3. DURING THE 1978 SEASON (WHICH STARTS DECEMBER 1977 AND NORMALLY ENDS IN MAY 1978) SOBELGRA HANDLED 750,000 TONS OF GRAIN FOR THE SOVIETS. THIS IS ABOUT 30 PERCENT OF SOBELGRA'S TOTAL VOLUME AND THEY CONSIDER THE SOVIETS GOOD CLIENTS. ALL GRAIN IS U.S. WHEAT. IT NORMALLY ARRIVES IN SOVIET, OR CHARTERED TANKERS. ACCORDING TO SOBELGRA, NORMAL TARIFFS ARE APPLIED BUT OTHER SOURCES

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ANTWER 00962 01 OF 02 270925Z

CLAIM THAT BECAUSE OF HUGE QUANTITIES INVOLVED SPECIAL RATES MAY BE GIVEN TO THE SOVIETS. NO SPECIFICS COULD BE OBTAINED ABOUT RATES FROM SOBELGRA. WE OBTAINED A THOROUGH RESEARCH DOCUMENT, HOWEVER, WHICH GIVES DIFFERENT COSTS APPLICABLE TO TRANSSHIPMENTS HANDLED BY SOBELGRA LISTING FLAGS OF DELIVERING SHIPS FOR 1978 SEASON. BELOW FOLLOWS A LIST FOR THE 1978 SEASON OF TRANSSHIPMENTS

OF WHEAT HANDLED BY SOBELGRA:

FLAG: SHIP: QUANTITIES:

RUSSIAN	GEROI SEVASTOPOLYA	77,371 TONS
RUSSIAN	AZOV	58,119
YUGOSLAV	ORJEN	54,968
RUSSIAN	ADYGEYA	75,169
RUSSIAN	MOZDOK	72,446
RUSSIAN	AZOV	54,632
INDIAN	JANA PRIYA	45,677
RUSSIAN	GEROI SEVASTOPOLYA	70,997
RUSSIAN	GEROI KERSHI	80,119
RUSSIAN	MOZDOK	71,635
U.K.	VENETIA	9,189
YUGOSLAV	SUTJESKA	55,000

4. THE OTHER FIRM HANDLING SOVIET GRAINS IN PORT OF ANTWERP IS SOCIETE GENERALE DES MINERAIS (WHICH ALSO HANDLES IRON ORES). THIS FIRM HANDLES EXCLUSIVELY YELLOW CORN NR 2 FOR THE SOVIETS AND CARGO FOR 1978 SEASON WAS ESTIMATED AT 750,000.

5. IT CAN BE SAFELY CONCLUDED THAT TOTAL SOVIET GRAIN TRANSSHIPMENTS FOR 1978 SEASON IN THE PORT OF ANTWERP AMOUNTED TO 1.5 MILLION TONS. THIS COMPARES WITH 600,000
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ANTWER 00962 01 OF 02 270925Z

TONS DURING 1976 AND 740,000 TONS DURING 1977 SEASONS.

6. ALL OUR SOURCES CONFIRM THAT SOVIET TRANSSHIPMENTS IN ANTWERP ARE ON THE INCREASE BECAUSE:

(A) THE PORT OF ANTWERP CAN ACCOMMODATE LARGE VESSELS WHICH NORMALLY CANNOT COME INTO THE SMALLER BALTIC PORTS. THEY ARE THEN UNLOADED INTO SMALLER COASTERS IN ANTWERP WITH VACUATORS WHICH ARE EASILY PLACED ON DECKS OF OCEAN VESSELS. APPARENTLY THERE ARE NOT TOO MANY RUSSIAN PORTS THAT HAVE LARGE SUCKING GRAIN CAPACITY. THE TRANSSHIPMENT IN ANTWERP TO COASTERS, THEREFORE, PROVIDES SOVIETS WITH BETTER AND CHEAPER INTERIOR GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION. ALTHOUGH LABOR COSTS IN ANTWERP ARE HIGH, THE FACILITIES FOR QUICK LOADING AND UNLOADING OFFER SOVIETS CHEAPER RATES OVERALL COMPARED TO ROTTERDAM WHERE THERE IS SOMETIMES A THREE WEEK WAITING PERIOD. SOBELGRA, FOR EXAMPLE, HANDLES 2000 TONS PER HOUR. THESE COASTERS RANGE IN CAPACITY FROM 2,000 TO 20,000 TONS.
SECRET

(B) ANTWERP IS CONSIDERED A FRIENDLY CITY AND ITS AUTHOR-

ITIES ARE COOPERATIVE. THE PRESENCE OF SOVIET CONTROLLED FREIGHT FORWARDING FIRMS TRANSWORLD MARINE, SOBELMARINE (SOVIET CONTROLLED SHIPPING AGENTS), FERCHIMEZ, DIALMAZ OFFER AN ADDED ADVANTAGE.

(C) SOURCES BELIEVE THAT CLIENTS RECEIVE PREFERENTIAL RATES IF VERY LARGE BULK QUANTITIES ARE INVOLVED. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHETHER SOVIET GRAIN TRANSSHIPMENTS WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE SINCE SOVIETS ARE UNCOMMUNICATIVE ABOUT THEIR MOTIVES FOR USING THE PORT OF ANTWERP. THE SOVIETS FEAR PUBLICITY FOR POLITICAL REASONS. THE LLOYDS ANVERSOIS (A LEADING ANTWERP NEWSPAPER) WROTE ABOUT THE RUSSIAN GRAIN TRAFFIC AND QUOTED SOBELGRA AS A SOURCE. EXACT DESTINATIONS OF SHIPMENTS UNKNOWN SINCE PAPERWORK
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 ANTWER 00962 01 OF 02 270925Z

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 ANTWER 00962 02 OF 02 270950Z
ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 AGRE-00 CIAE-00 /031 W
-----088388 271000Z /13
P 270915Z JUL 78
FM AMCONSUL ANTWERP
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0000

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 ANTWERP 0962

HANDLED BY SOVIET CONTROLLED FREIGHT FORWARDING FIRMS. SOURCES SUSPECT BALTIC PORTS. TRANSWORLD MARINE IS DEVELOPING INTO AN IMPORTANT FREIGHT FORWARDING FIRM. IT HANDLES ALL TYPES OF FREIGHT FOR ANYONE TO ANY DESTINATION. IT HAS BRANCHES IN ROTTERDAM AND DUSSELDORF. IT HAS SOVIET EXECUTIVES ON ITS STAFF. THE SOVIETS EVEN BUILT A VERY MODERN SPORTS COMPLEX TO ACCOMMODATE RUSSIAN SAILORS ON ANTWERP'S LEFT RIVER BANK.

7. CONSULAR OFFICER, ON A COURTESY CALL TO SOVIET VICE CONSUL IN ANTWERP, LEARNED THAT SOVIETS EXPECT SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL AND ADDITIONAL VICE CONSUL TO STAFF SOVIET

CONSULATE GENERAL IN ANTWERP. DENYS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: IMPORTS, GRAINS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ANTWER00962
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2 O
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780307-1261
Format: TEL
From: ANTWERP
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780711/aaaaajkj.tel
Line Count: 171
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1d7e566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 167837
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1860769
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET GRAIN TRANSSHIPMENT IN WESTERN EUROPE
TAGS: EEWT, ETRN, BE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1d7e566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014